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Security Council

Sixty-first year

Provisional

5574th meeting

Tuesday, 28 November 2006, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Voto-Bernales	(Peru)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Estremé
	China	Mr. Li Kexin
	Congo	Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. Lacroix
	Ghana	Mr. Beliwine
	Greece	Ms. Yannakou
	Japan	Mr. Shinyo
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Sulaiti
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Slovakia	Mr. Babicz
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Salaita
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

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06-63159 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq), took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/919, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Denmark, Japan, Slovakia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw members' attention to document S/2006/888, which contains a letter dated 14 November 2006 from the representative of Iraq, transmitting a letter from the Prime Minister of Iraq.

I should also like to draw members' attention to document S/2006/899, which contains a letter dated 17 November 2006 from the representative of the United States, transmitting a letter from the Secretary of State of the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, China, Congo, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1723 (2006).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Bolton (United States of America): The United States notes the request of the Iraqi Government for the continuing support of the Multinational Force in Iraq in helping it to face the current security challenges, and welcomes the Security Council's speedy adoption of today's resolution to extend for an additional 12 months the mandate set out in Security Council resolution 1546 (2004), as well as the arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board.

The Multinational Force in Iraq continues to play a vital role in the security and stability of Iraq. It is also working in close partnership with the Iraqi Government towards the development of Iraq's ability to assume responsibility for the country's security. The United States remains committed to a unified, democratic and prosperous Iraq, and looks forward to the continued cooperation of the international community for Iraq's future.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): The resolution we have adopted today is a unanimous response by the Security Council to a request from the Government of Iraq. The resolution extends for 12 months the Multinational Force mandate on the terms set out in resolution 1546 (2004), as well as the arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. As with resolution 1637 (2005), this resolution comes with the important assurance that the Iraqi Government may, at any time, seek a review of the arrangements or the termination of the Multinational Force in Iraq mandate.

The United Kingdom will continue working in close partnership with the Iraqi Government both bilaterally and as a contributor to the Multinational Force. We will continue to assist in the progressive

transfer of security responsibilities to the Iraqi Security Forces. The Multinational Force has already been able to hand over two provinces, Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar, to Iraqi control this past summer. Conditions permitting, we look forward to notable progress in the next year.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia has voted in support of this Security Council resolution to extend the mandate of the Multinational Force in Iraq.

We note that the resolution's authors took into account our main concern set forth during the discussions on the document. Our first concern is the security of accredited diplomatic personnel in Iraq, and next the reaffirmation that the presence of foreign troops in the country will be limited and temporary.

At the same time, we regret that the resolution in no way reflects our proposal on the importance of continuing the political process in Iraq, the foundation of which was laid at the conferences in Cairo and Sharm al-Sheikh. We will continue to consider these initiatives to be timely, particularly from the standpoint of the military and political situation currently prevailing in Iraq and the importance of finding a viable formula for national dialogue.

We must recognize that the situation in Iraq continues to be complex. At the moment, signs of improvement are not being seen. In spite of all of efforts made by the Government of Iraq and by the Multinational Force, the growth of violence and terrorist activity is not being stopped. The inter-ethnic confrontations between the various religious groups have reached extremely dangerous levels and have taken over a large part of the country.

The continuing division of Iraqi society, particularly of the Arab part of it, is a major threat for the future of Iraq. The restraint, patience and self-control that the people of this country have shown in these difficult times are not unlimited.

Today, the near-unanimous view is that it is a priority to achieve national reconciliation and consensus. It has been recognized that, if that problem is not solved, it will be impossible to save the country from this crisis and create the necessary conditions to preserve its territorial integrity, its security and its economic restoration.

We believe that, without effective follow-up by the international community in reaching a settlement in Iraq, the country's politicians will have difficulty in overcoming the inertia caused by mutual distrust. In this context, what is required is constructive interaction on the part of Iraq's neighbours, the leading countries in the region, as well as the League of Arab States.

For our part, we are prepared to participate actively in preparing and implementing any initiative that would help further rapid stabilization of the situation in Iraq.

Mr. Lacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): France voted in favour of this technical renewal in order to respond to the official request of the Government of Iraq for a one-year extension of the mandate of the Multinational Force in Iraq. On this occasion, my delegation would like to express its concern with respect to the worsening security situation and also to recall that we all share the same objective, which is to help Iraq into the civil war that threatens it and to recover the stability that it aspires to.

As the President of the French Republic has declared, the French authorities have always believed that offering a clear horizon for the withdrawal of foreign troops would make it possible to send the message that the objective of the international community is that of restoring the sovereignty of Iraq. My delegation is pleased to note that the resolution integrates explicitly this prospect of withdrawal that would come under the sovereign decision of Iraq.

The French delegation would like to stress that the presence of the Multinational Force in Iraq is supporting a political transition process whose success depends on the involvement of the power of all of the components of Iraq. In this perspective, France hopes that the progress in the national inter-Iraqi dialogue seen in the meetings in Sharm al-Sheikh in November 2004 and then in Cairo in November 2005 will continue with the support of the countries in the region and will soon lead to the organization of a national reconciliation conference for Iraq.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.